

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 00321 100749Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9095
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL UDORN
USUN NEW YORK 618
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0321

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP PDEV PORG EAID LA US PEPR
SUBJECT: LPDR POLICY TOWARD FOREIGN RESIDENTS

REF: A 77 VIENTIANE 0815, B VIENTIANE 0170, C 77 VIEN-
TIANE 1587, D VIENTIANE 0226

1. SOMCHIT PHILATHAVONG, DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
INTERANTIONAL ORGANIZATIONS QN THE LAO MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, INFORMED THE UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTA-
TIVE MARCH 8 THAT THE LPDR HAD UNILATERALLY TERMINATED
THE CONTRACTS OF FOUR UNDP EXPERTS. THE UNDP RESREP
TOLD US MARCH 8 THAT THE EXPERTS ASKED TO QUIT THE LPDR
WERE A BELGIAN SWINE EXPERT, AN ITALIAN AGRONOMIST, A
FRENCH BIOLOGIST, AND A FRENCH POPULATION STATISTICIAN.

2. THE RESREP SAID THAT THE LAO GOVERNMENT HAD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VIENTI 00321 100749Z

APPROVED (ALSO ON MARCH 8) TWO HUNGARIAN, A BULGARIAN,
AND A YUGOSLAV EXPERT FOR NEW UNDP SPONSORED PROJECTS.

3. THE RESREP SAID THAT ALTHOUGH HE WAS DISAPPOINTED
THAT THE LAO HAD TAKEN THIS STEP WHEN HE HAD ONLY BEEN
AT POST FOR ONE MONTH, HE DID NOT THINK THAT IT WOULD
DISRUPT THE UNDP PROGRAM. HE SAID THAT HE HAD ALREADY

PLANNED TO SHIFT UNDP PROGRAM EMPHASIS AWAY FROM PROJECTS SUPERVISED BY EXPERTS.

4. THE WHO CHIEF REPRESENTATIVE IN VIENTIANE TOLD US MARCH 9 THAT THE LAO IN EARLY FEBRUARY HAD REQUESTED THAT WHO REPLACE ITS SYRIAN MALARIA SPECIALIST WITH AN EXPERT FROM A COMMUNIST COUNTRY. HE SAID THAT A MINISTRY OF HEALTH OFFICIAL HAD SAID THAT THE SYRIAN EXPERT DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE NEW LAO SYSTEM AND THAT HE WAS TOO OPEN IN HIS CRITICISM OF THE LAO. THE WHO REPRESENTATIVE ALSO SAID THAT HE HAD HAD NO PROBLEMS IN OBTAINING THE APPROVAL OF NEW WHO EXPERTS FROM CUBA, EAST GERMANY, POLAND, AND THE USSR. IN CONTRAST HE HAD BEEN WAITING FOR SEVERAL MONTHS FOR THE APPROVAL OF TWO PROPOSED FRENCH EXPERTS AND FEARED THAT THE LAO MIGHT NOT AGREE TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE LYON MEDICAL UNIVERSITY EXCHANGE PROGRAM.

5. REF A REPORTED IN MAY 1977 THAT THE LPDR POLICY WAS TO GIVE PRIORITY TO APPROVING MULTILATERAL AID EXPERTS FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES OVER THOSE FROM CAPITALIST COUNTRIES AND THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (POSSIBLY KAYSONE PHOMVIHANE HIMSELF) MADE THE FINAL DECISION ON APPROVAL OF EXPERTS. REF A ALSO REPORTED THAT A LAO MFA OFFICIAL HAD SAID THAT A "DECISION HAD COME DOWN FROM THE TOP" THAT RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVES

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PAGE 03 VIENTI 00321 100749Z

FROM NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS WERE NO LONGER WELCOME IN THE LPDR. CANADIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS OVERSEAS, THE MENNONITES, AND THE QUAKERS WERE ASKED TO QUIT THE LPDR DURING 1977. ALTHOUGH THE LAO LATER REVERSED THE DECISION CITING POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS (REF A), THE EMBASSY COMMENTED AT THE TIME THAT THE REASON THE LAO HAD ASKED THE GROUPS TO LEAVE WAS TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE WESTERN COMMUNITY IN LAOS.

6. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY NOW BELIEVES THAT THE LAO REQUEST THAT FOUR UNDP EXPERTS (ALL NATIONALS OF WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES) TERMINATE THEIR PROJECTS IS EVIDENCE THAT THERE IS A LPDR POLICY EVENTUALLY TO REPLACE AID EXPERTS FROM CAPITALIST COUNTRIES WITH THOSE FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. THE LAO WOULD APPARENTLY LIKE TO MINIMIZE THE SIZE OF THE WESTERN COMMUNITY. WE BELIEVE THAT THE RECENT SERIES OF RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON THE FOREIGN COMMUNITY IS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THIS POLICY (REFS B, C, D).

ROBERTS

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